

W5YI

Nation's Oldest Ham Radio Newsletter REPORT

Up to the minute news from the world of amateur radio, personal computing and emerging electronics. While no guarantee is made, information is from sources we believe to be reliable. May be reproduced providing credit is given to The W5YI Report.

Fred Maia, W5YI, Editor, P.O. Box 565101, Dallas, TX 75356-5101
Tel. 817-461-6443 Electronic mail: fmaia@mci.com

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Vol. 18, Issue #4

\$1.50

PUBLISHED TWICE A MONTH

February 15, 1996

FCC REFUSES TO LIMIT AMATEUR 219-220 MHz OPERATIONS

On January 25, 1996, the FCC affirmed the secondary allocation of the 219-220 MHz band for use by the Amateur Radio Service, granting in part and denying in part a *Petition for Reconsideration* filed by Orion Telecom, a licensee in the Automated Maritime Telecommunications Systems.

AMTS provides duplex phone, facsimile/data and teleprinter ship-to-shore communications for the nation's navigable inland waterways and along offshore coastal waters. Most AMTS stations are on the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers and along the Gulf coast. Their communications consists primarily of maritime telephone service which can dial into the public switched landline network ...and operational weather, position and supply reports.

In response to an ARRL petition requesting access to the 216-220 MHz band on a secondary, non-interference basis, the FCC allocated a one megahertz slice at 219-220 MHz. The League had sought the allocation on the basis that amateurs were forced to vacate the 220-222-MHz segment by August 27, 1995 to make way for narrowband business communications. The specific use of the band would be for amateur coordinated, directional digital packet "backbone" networks.

The FCC chose the 219-220 MHz segment because it is essentially unused in the majority of the U.S. The 216-218 MHz segment is, however allocated to various electronic tracking applications and the new Interactive Video and Data Service. IVDS, which has yet to be deployed, permits

TV viewers to respond to television stations. Most IVDS licensees got the spectrum by buying the license at auction. But it may never become popular since it appears that the free Internet is destined to become the return path for broadcaster inquiries.

A Naval Space Surveillance System operates at 216.98 MHz. NAVSPASUR provides a high power electronic curtain from which energy is reflected by aircraft approaching the United States.

Objections to 219-220 MHz amateur access

Of particular concern to Orion were the 40 channels used by ships between 219.0125 and 219.9875 MHz to communicate with coast stations. Orion argued that the FCC should rescind its decision to allocate the 219-220 MHz band to the amateur radio service because of the 80 km (50 statute mile) exclusion distance between AMTS and amateur operations is insufficient to protect primary AMTS operations from harmful amateur interference.

Orion asserted that a 925 km (575 mile) exclusion distance is necessary to protect AMTS operations. Orion further maintained that such an exclusion distance would render the 219-220 MHz band unusable for the Amateur Radio Service because this exclusion distance around AMTS operation would effectively exclude amateur operations from urban areas where they are predominantly concentrated.

THE W5YI REPORT [Pub. No. 009-311] is published twice monthly by The W5YI Group, 2000 E. Randol Mill Rd., #608A, Arlington, TX. 76011
SUBSCRIPTION RATE: (U.S., Canada and Mexico) One Year (24 issues) \$24.50 • Two Years: \$45.00 • Three Years: \$64.00. Tel. 817/461-6443

Foreign Subscriptions via Air Mail: \$39.50 per year. (Payment may be made by Check, Money Order, VISA or MasterCard payable in U.S. funds.)
Second Class Postage paid at Arlington, TX. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE W5YI REPORT, P.O. Box 565101, Dallas, TX. 75356

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Orion also stated that in the event the FCC does not rescind the allocation, the Commission should amend the rules to provide better protection for AMTS operation. Orion specifically requested the Commission to:

- 1) modify the rules specifically to protect AMTS remote receivers;
- 2) require all amateur operations in the 219-220 MHz band to use interference avoidance techniques;
- 3) amend the rules to correspond specifically with the text of the Report and Order concerning the immediate resolution of any interference by amateurs to AMTS licensees;
- 4) require type acceptance of all amateur equipment used in the 219-220 MHz band;
- 5) require the amateur notification provided AMTS licensees to include the technical specifics of the proposed amateur operation, and;
- 6) to require the maximum permissible power of amateur operations in the 219-220 MHz band be limited according to the percentage of the channel over which the signal is spread to prevent high-powered narrowband signals.

The FCC denied these requests. Nevertheless, the FCC took note of Orion's expressed concern that the amateur rules do not adequately specify the frequency range of AMTS operations and, thus, database searches conducted by amateurs could miss some AMTS coast stations.

Accordingly, the FCC amended the rules to indicate that AMTS operations specifically use the 217-218 MHz and 219-220 MHz Bands.

FCC ORDERS AMATEUR TO PAY \$500 FINE

The FCC has denied the Petition for Reconsideration of William P. Irwin, K3OQR of DeBary, Florida. Irwin had been ordered to pay a \$500 fine by the Vero Beach FCC Field Office "...for willful and repeated interference in the amateur radio service." The forfeiture order also had charged that Irwin had failed to identify his station with his call sign.

In December 1992, the Vero Beach Field Office became aware of interfering transmissions on the 20-meter frequency of 14.315 MHz. These interfering transmissions continued on a regular basis until July 23, 1993, when FCC agents found that the interfering transmissions originated from Irwin's home.

During the subsequent inspection conducted by the FCC agents, Irwin admitted that he used his amateur radio station to cause interference with other amateur operators. He referred to his interfering transmission station as "Raincoat Charlie."

The Vero Beach Field Office issued K3OQR a *Notice of Apparent Liability* (NAL) for \$2,000 on July 28, 1993. On August 11, 1993, Irwin responded to the NAL and again admitted to the transmissions, but asked for abeyance of the fine and claimed his inability to pay.

The Vero Beach Field Office denied the request for abeyance of the fine, but found Irwin's claim of inability to pay the claim persuasive. The fine was, therefore, reduced to \$500.00 on August 17, 1993.

Again Irwin renewed his 'inability to pay' the claim, but provided no financial information that would warrant a further reduction in the fine.

Beverly G. Baker, Chief of the FCC's Compliance and Information Bureau (formerly known as the Field Operations Bureau) ruled that the Vero Beach Field Office had indeed properly followed the forfeiture guidelines. Section 503(b) of the Communications Act requires that the Commission "...take into account the nature, circumstances, extent and gravity of the violation, and with respect to the violator, the degree of culpability, any history of prior offenses, ability to pay, and other such matters as justice may require."

The CIB said, "Because the petitioner admitted to willfully and repeatedly causing interference to communications in the amateur radio service, we conclude that issuance of a forfeiture is warranted. Based on the petitioner's demonstrated inability to pay, we have determined that a \$500 forfeiture is reasonable."

Irwin also requested to inspect the FCC's records pertaining to the investigation of the events leading to his apprehension and fine. FCC said "These materials are not routinely available for public inspection. Should the petitioner wish to pursue the information request further, he must file a request for access to records under the *Freedom of Information Act*." Irwin was ordered to pay the \$500 fine by Feb. 26, 1996.

It should be pointed out that Irwin's FOIA request (if submitted) will probably be denied. Section 1905 of the Criminal Code, 18 U.S.C. 1905, prohibits the unauthorized disclosure of certain confidential information. These exemptions include trade secrets, confidential financial information, interagency or intra-agency memorandums or letters, invasion of privacy and:

"Investigatory records compiled for law enforcement purposes, to the extent that production of such records would:

- (1) interfere with enforcement proceedings,
- (2) Deprive a person of a right to fair trial or an impartial adjudication,
- (3) Constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy,
- (4) Disclose the identity of a confidential source,
- (5) Disclose investigative techniques or procedures; or
- (6) Endanger the life or physical safety of law enforcement personnel.

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MIAMI's TROPICAL HAMBOREE DRAWS 7,000

The 36th Tropical Hambooree kicked off on February 3rd at the Youth Fair Expo Center. Historically, it is the first major hamfest of the year. The annual event is sponsored by the members of the Dade Radio Club of Miami. Although most of the country was covered with ice and snow ...and record low temperatures, the weather in south Florida was perfect! Temperatures were a balmy 75 to 85 degrees for most of the weekend. The radio club had invited the weathermen from the National Hurricane Center to be a part of the show and made them promise to have sunny, warm weather in return. And they delivered!

The Dade Radio Club announced that LeAnn S. Kessler, N9ZYJ (Pensacola, FL) and Tony Drake, KC4OBY (Bradenton, FL) were each this year's winners of \$1,000 Hambooree Scholarships.

There were many featured programs including an "Instructor-to-Instructor" Education Forum hosted by ARRL's Rosalie White, WA1STO and an FCC Forum conducted by the Miami FCC Field Office Engineer-in-Charge John Theimer. The featured speaker was Ralph A. Haller, N4RH, Deputy Chief of the FCC's Washington D.C., Wireless Telecommunications Bureau. AMSAT presented an interesting program on the upcoming launch of the Phase 3D amateur satellite. ARRL-VEs conducted amateur radio license examinations on Sunday morning, W5YI-VEs in the afternoon.

Presentation by FCC's Ralph Haller

Haller began his remarks by discussing the immense value of the radio spectrum. He told how two 30 MHz slices of the 1.8 GHz band were sold to commercial interests for \$9 billion. (That's \$150,000 a kilohertz!) While it took cellular telephones a decade to be fully implemented, he said the new Personal Communications Service will be deployed "...almost overnight." PCS is the new low-cost digital telephone service.

"Job opportunities abound," Haller said. "Stay at the forefront of what's happening. ...Hams have a lot of spectrum [but] public safety and amateur frequencies are not auctionable."

Haller also discussed the success of electronic filing of Amateur Radio license applications. "License information is now available in less than 48 hours after the VECs upload the information to the FCC," he said. "It used to take up to 60 days to receive a ham license. The Amateur Service has become the model for the other services." He called electronic filing an example of the "...growing partnership between government and industry."

Unfortunately electronic filing was halted for a four week "vacation" when 1,020 FCC personnel were furloughed due to the federal budget controversy and bad

weather. The spectrum auctions continued during the furlough, however, since this activity (and the money they generate to the government) were considered essential. Haller said that the furlough caused the FCC to be 70,000 license applications behind in other services. He said the goal was to eliminate the backlog by June 1st. The FCC is also looking for ways to streamline the licensing of ship - including pleasure craft - and aircraft radio stations and we could hear something about this shortly.

Haller briefly discussed the amateur repeater coordinator's meeting that was recently held in St. Louis. He said that "...frequency coordination was another area where the FCC was looking for partnerships. Are changes or improvements necessary?" He said that was the only purpose of the meeting.

"The FCC is faced with how to cut back on services [and] we are looking for ways for the Amateur Service to help. [But] ...we don't have the answers. The Miami FCC field office will shortly close and there will be no FCC presence here in the future. More volunteer organizations will have to step in and assist."

The Part 97 Rules

Ralph Haller admitted that it was hard to keep up with the Part 97 FCC amateur service rules because they are constantly changing and the government only publishes its regulations once a year. He suggested that amateurs access the FCC's Internet web site for the texts of recent amateur decisions that are located under "wireless." He said "The FCC has no master plan for the amateur service. It will evolve according to technology. We try to broadly write rules that allow flexibility and for new technology."

"Rules get changed by suggestions and petitions. Many are repetitive and frivolous but some are accepted for public comment. Always ask yourself, 'Do we really need more rules?' Local problems do not usually need nationwide regulations."

Haller cautioned the audience about the importance of responding to proposed rulemaking. "Help us get the word out. Disseminating information is important. If we do not hear from you, then we must rely on the comments we do get." He said that the "plan for the future" is to be able to post incoming comments on the Internet. "The FCC's web site pages were updated just yesterday." A new 'FCC Call Center' will be opening in Gettysburg, PA.

"We are trying to get the rules to as close as we can to what you want. 'No code' is working well ...extremely successful, ...although controversial at the time. We are guided by international rules." He cited other new rule examples ...such as those that permit new amateurs to get on the air faster by being allowed to begin operation as soon as their call sign is

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available. "You don't have to wait for your license to arrive."

The controversial 'no business' rule was relaxed to permit personal business transactions. "Amateur radio is not a substitute for commercial radio, but you should be able to be asked to pick up milk on your way home," he said. "You know when you cross the line. A tow truck can be called over ham radio to assist ...but not clients to set up business meetings." The data communications rules were relaxed. "It made no sense to hold each station along a packet network responsible for communications content. Now only the originating and gateway stations are accountable."

"After the incoming comments are studied, then a *Report and Order* is written addressing the comments and rule changes. A *Petition for Reconsideration* can be submitted saying 'You did it wrong.' We need that," Haller said. An example is the Vanity Call Sign issue.

"Just because the rules do not specifically permit an activity does not mean it is prohibited. For example, the requirement that amateurs keep a log book was abolished years ago, but you can certainly keep one if you want to."

"We have tried to write simple, easy-to-understand rules in plain language. If you have rules that need to be clarified, let us know."

Vanity call signs

"Two events happened that allowed the vanity call sign system to go forward: Congress gave us the go ahead and a new computer system in Gettysburg replaced our 30 year old Honeywell main frame."

Haller said one of his goals when he was Chief of the Private Radio Bureau was a vanity call sign program for the amateur service. "It has taken us time to get a vanity call sign program in place that is fair and equitable. The first system was based on a 'first-come, first-serve' basis. The ultimate system involves entering a series of gates. Gate 1 is for previous call sign holders and relatives of deceased amateurs. Then Gate 1A allows memorial calls for clubs, followed by (2) Extra Class amateurs, (3) Advanced and (4) the rest."

"You said you wanted vanity call signs to conform to the sequential [group call sign] system and class of operator license." Technicians, for example, may apply only for Group C (1-by-3) and D (2-by-3 format) call signs "...even if a close family relative held a higher class license."

Trustees of radio clubs applying for memorial call signs of deceased members "...must be eligible for the license [call sign] level of the deceased." No one is ever required to change a call sign. With few exceptions, applicants for vanity call signs may apply for available call signs in other call sign districts.

"There are lots of tools available to determine call

sign availability." Haller said there were 15 million possible combinations. "Try as best you can to select available call signs. You can select up to 25 call signs but all 25 need not be chosen. Remember, specific call signs must be chosen [and not a range of call signs]." Applications for vanity call signs with the \$30 check made out to the FCC must be sent to the Mellon Bank in Pittsburgh, PA. "The \$30 fee does not directly support the program."

Ralph got his N4RH call sign in the 1970's under a previous program which permitted Extra Class amateurs to choose an available call sign. "I would have preferred W4RH but it wasn't available." (Laughter) W4RH is assigned to Frank Butler, ARRL Southeastern Division Director who was in the audience. Haller said that he "...expected that Gate number one would open within the next 90 days," but he was not certain.

A Fact Sheet is available from the FCC explaining how the vanity call sign program operates. "Send an e-mail message to John Johnston [W3BE, FCC Private Wireless Division] at [Internet address] jjohnsto@fcc.gov who has volunteered, as of now, to respond to your questions."

Haller also briefly discussed other pending rule-making which would increase the number of amateurs from 2 to 4 that would be needed to form a club, recognition of a VE Session Manager, a Special Event Call Sign System and examination credit which would be valid for life. He even mentioned that an Internet issued Amateur Radio license may be on the horizon which would eliminate all paperwork "And License renewal via the Internet could be available this year ...or renewals might be filtered through the VECs."

In the short question and answer session which followed his remarks, Haller said he was not sure how long each of the vanity call sign gates would remain open. "It all depends on the number of 610-V's (vanity call sign applications) we receive."

Gate One of the Vanity Call Sign System provides a mechanism for obtaining a previously held call sign by an applicant, club station or the relative of a deceased amateur. It is our belief that many - and perhaps most - licensees will not have a copy of the previous license. We asked Haller what documentation was acceptable to support a previously held call sign. He said the FCC would accept any reasonable third party documentation ...such as a Call Book entry, confirmation by an organization such as the ARRL, ...even a previously published article that contained your call sign. He did not mention dated QSL cards, but we suppose that would also fall within the realm of reasonable third party confirmation. "We can be flexible without compromising the program," he said.

In closing, Ralph Haller said, "The amateur service is healthy and I think it will survive."

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AMERICAN RADIO RELAY LEAGUE COMMITTEE TO ADDRESS AMATEUR RADIO RESTRUCTURING

Strangely, there was no Industry Meeting held prior to the Tropical Hamboree ...a departure from previous years. The ARRL did, however, hold a reception for the Amateur Radio Industry in a tenth floor meeting room at the Miami Airport Marriott Hotel.

Members of industry were greeted by an easel which contained a magnified version of an item No. 89 resolution that was adopted at the 1996 Annual Meeting of the ARRL Board of Directors. That meeting was held on January 19-20 at the Marriott Riverfront Hotel in Savannah, Georgia. The resolution read:

89. On motion of Mr. [Fried] Heyn, [WA6WZO] seconded by Mr. (Stephen) Mendelsohn, [WA2DHF] the following resolution was ADOPTED.

WHEREAS, various concepts for simplification of the Amateur Radio Service licensing structure are being discussed in the amateur community; and

WHEREAS, the League is committed to the principle that no structural changes should reduce the privileges of existing classes; and

WHEREAS, maintaining integrity of the amateur examination and licensing process is essential to the future health and growth of Amateur Radio; and

WHEREAS, the League is cognizant of efforts to harmonize the standards for amateur licensing in different countries, which supports the objective of reducing the barriers to the movement of radio amateurs across international borders; and

WHEREAS, these issues are related to the provisional WRC-99 agenda item to consider Article S 25 of the International Radio Regulations, the technical and operational rules governing the Amateur and Amateur-Satellite Services, including but not limited to the requirement to demonstrate Morse code ability in order to operate below 30 MHz; and

WHEREAS, the ARRL Board of Directors recognizes that it is essential for the League to solicit input on these issues from the broad range of its membership and to develop policies that will insure the future health and growth of Amateur Radio; **NOW THEREFORE**,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the President is authorized to appoint a committee made up of Board members and other representatives of the broad range of the membership. The terms of reference shall be to make recommendations for ARRL policy positions encompassing the issues listed above. The committee's first tasks shall be to define the process by which membership input should be solicited and the opinions of the membership objectively determined, and to formulate a request for funding for this process and for the remainder of the committee's work. The target date for completion of these initial tasks shall be 120 days after appointment. The committee's final report shall be rendered to the Board no later than December 17, 1996.

The resolution was a topic of widespread discussion among many of the ham radio dealers and industry members in attendance. There was a general feeling that the ARRL would indeed be supporting some sort of overhauling of the amateur service to bring it up to date with modern telecommunications technology.

In other action at the ARRL Board of Director's Annual Meeting:

(1.) Barry J. Shelly, N1VXY, Chief Financial Officer said among the challenges of 1996 is to improve the profitability of product operations and increasing membership in the face of fewer people entering Amateur Radio.

(2.) The Board adopted resolutions congratulating David Mann (VP2EHF) and Dorothea Mann (VP2EE) for handling thousands of NTS (National Traffic System) messages for residents of Anguilla and other Caribbean Islands during Hurricanes Dean, Hugo, Luis and (most recently) Marilyn. They were presented the ARRL International Humanitarian Award for 1995.

(3.) Members of the Oklahoma Section of the Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) were presented with an ARRL Certificate of Merit for their emergency communications efforts during the Oklahoma City Bombing disaster on April 19, 1995.

(4.) Frank Bauer, KA3HDO was awarded the ARRL National Certificate of Merit for his outstanding volunteer service as a member of the SAREX (Shuttle Amateur Radio Experiment) Working Group. Frank organized a network of tracking stations around the world and obtained the services of a national teleconferencing company to enhance the network by providing telebridge facilities at no cost to schools in locations where direct contact was not possible.

(4.) The Board agreed to establish a committee to review the entire DXCC Program and to encourage broader participation. Improvements and increased efficiency in the program will also be recommended.

(5.) The Board adopted a resolution concerning the use by ARRL Divisions and Sections of the Internet's World Wide Web. Policy recommendations regarding control and content of official ARRL Web pages will be made to the Board at their next meeting.

(6.) Stephen Mendelsohn, WA2DHF was elected as First Vice President. Both Joel M. Harrison, WB5IGF and Hugh A. Turnbull, W3ABC were elected as additional Vice Presidents. President Rodney J. Stafford KB6ZV was re-elected ..as was Dave Sumner, K1ZZ (Executive Vice President and Secretary); Barry J. Shelly, N1VXY (Chief, Financial Officer); James E. McCobb, Jr., K1LLU (Treasurer); and Larry E. Price, W4RA (International Affairs Vice President). Elected to the Executive Committee were Mary Lou Brown NM7N, John C. Kanode N4MM, Frank M. Butler W4RH, and Fried Heyn WA6WZO.

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PERSONAL COMPUTING

■ It now appears that Apple Computer will not be sold or merge with another company after all. To counter bad media publicity (which the firm says is part of the problem), Apple took out a full page ads in major newspapers including the *Wall Street Journal* to tell the public just how great and accepted its Macintosh computers really are. Clearly, however, its financial condition (which continues to deteriorate), its unbalanced inventory position (too many low-end, low profit machines) and overall business (lower market share) will mean an even bigger loss is the next quarter. And in one swoop, the Apple Board of Directors replaced both their CEO and Chairman with board member Dr. Gilbert F. Amelio, from National Semiconductor, Inc.

■ Packard-Bell Computers has been taking on foreign ownership. Japan's NEC Corp. (the biggest PC company in Asia) and Machine Bull (mostly owned by the French government) have been pumping huge amounts of money into the ailing manufacturer and together now own about 40% of the firm. The problem (like Apple) is too many low-end, unsold Packard-Bell PCs. Be on the lookout for relatively inexpensive 75-MHz Pentium machines. A convertible stock arrangement could ultimately propel the NEC/Bull ownership position to over 50%. Bull has merged their ZDS (Zenith Data Systems) PC unit in with Packard-Bell. Analysts believe the company will eventually be the U.S. subsidiary of NEC. Packard-Bell now becomes the largest computer maker in the U.S. with sales of \$5.5 billion. But even more foreign competition is coming. Toshiba, Fujitsu, Hitachi and Sony are getting ready to enter the U.S. desktop market.

NEWS FROM THE INTERNET

■ Microsoft has enlisted the aid of two anti-virus software vendors (McAfee and Symantec) to distribute anti-virus remedies to protect against the so-called "Boza" virus that is targeting Windows 95 and Microsoft "Word" processing. The virus is spread by down-

loading and running infected programs from the Internet.

■ Ambushing Internet customers is getting to be an art! Here is how it is done. Web search engines (and there are many) look for key words in Website banner information. You simply include a rival's key words or even their name in your banner and users are referred to your Website when they try to find your competitor! It is done all the time! And some Websites use tricky banner keywords to attract you!

■ Electronic mail has become the fastest growing segment of the Information Age. In 1953, a first class stamp cost 3¢, 10¢ in 1974, 20¢ in 1981 and 32¢ today. At the present rate of inflation, 20 years from now it would cost \$3.15 to mail a first class letter. By the end of the century (less than four years from now) most every household will have e-mail capability.

CONSUMER ONLINE SERVICE

■ Subscribers are flocking to America Online, Inc.! The number of paying customers grew by half a million last month and the Vienna, VA service now says it has some 5 million subscribers. AOL says it isn't worried about World Wide Web based competition since only 11% of its total accessed content is Web usage.

■ CompuServe, Inc., a division of H&R Block, is taking no chances. They will unveil an Internet-only service to be called Sprynet which will compete with their online CompuServe Information Service. It will offer a full slate of Internet features including the World Wide Web and e-mail. The pricing will be very competitive with (or less than) Netcom and Microsoft! The two plans call for \$19.95 a month for unlimited service ...and as little as \$4.95 for 3 hours and \$1.95 per hour additional.

■ AT&T's new WorldNet online consumer service is getting ready to go national within 30 days. And with it will come an interesting marketing wrinkle. The nearly 18 million holders of its Universal MasterCard will get free Internet insurance against improper use in cyberspace! AT&T says that improper credit card usage on the Internet is really not much of a problem, but

that cardholders perceive that it is. VISA and MasterCard have already joined forces to develop a standardized system for credit card payments on the Internet. But AT&T is the first to say that no matter how you use your Universal card on the net, it is protected - even the first \$50. It could cause other credit card companies to follow suit.

■ We heard that Sears Roebuck & Co., was "definitely" giving up its 50% stake in Prodigy Services Co., and that IBM (who owns the other 50%) would be buying them out. Sears had no comment and IBM said they were "...still debating."

■ And the new MCI, News Corp., joint online "iGuide" venture will not materialize ...at least not as originally envisioned. MCI has now announced a new online alliance with Microsoft and the long delayed MCI/News Corp./Delphi service now appears in trouble. They are laying off 40% of their staff. MCI and Microsoft will sell each others products. That means MCI could begin pushing the Microsoft Network and "iGuide" might be a part of it.

We heard Oracle Corp. (and CEO Larry Ellison) will now team up with News Corp. (and CEO Rupert Murdoch), in an online Web service. Oracle will use the venture to push its controversial \$500 "Internet Appliance."

■ You will be seeing News Corp./Fox programming turning up on MCI's new Direct Broadcast Satellite service instead of on the Internet. MCI coughed up \$682.5 million for the last orbital slot which can broadcast to all 50 U.S. states. They have formed a 50/50 joint venture to offer a yet unnamed 150 channel DBS consumer and business service. Each will put up \$1 billion to launch the service. MCI will also involve Microsoft in the enterprise. The DBS service will be used to send Microsoft programs direct to customers computers.

■ By the way, Wal-Mart - the nation's largest retailer, has also just signed a deal with Microsoft to supply software for the new Wal-Mart Online Shopping Mall. It will be interesting to see what the "Always the Lowest Prices" firm comes up with.

High technology projects are happening so fast with big corporations that it is difficult to keep up with it all!

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ODDS AND ENDS

■ Tandy Corp., has a routine habit of collecting names and addresses which it uses for promotional mail marketing purposes. One resourceful San Diego, CA customer asked that Tandy's Computer City not send him any unsolicited mail. He wrote these instructions (with a \$1,000 breach of contract penalty) on the back of the check and added, "The deposit of this check for payment is agreement with these terms and conditions." He sued for \$5,000 when five Computer City fliers arrived but was awarded \$1,000 in small claims court.

■ WordPerfect, once the nation's leading word processing program is now the property of Corel Corp. of Ottawa, Canada. Novell, Inc., (the networking people) bought the program in 1994 for \$855 million. Reports are that they sold it at the fire sale price of less than \$200 million. They plan to bundle WordPerfect products with CorelDraw and Corel's Ventura desktop publishing program. Corel also will use the product in a program which will allow users to easily publish World Wide Web pages. WordPerfect has an installed base of some 20 million users!

■ General Motors has a new emergency communications system that not only automatically calls for help when a car's air bag is deployed - it tells authorities where you are! The device works by linking the cellular network with orbiting GPS (positioning) satellites. The system can also report a stolen car and where it can be found!

AMATEUR RADIO

■ A user of AMSAT's Bulletin Board asked whether there would be a ham station on the International Space Station. Frank H. Bauer, KA3HDO of the SAREX Working Group answered. "With the current governmental budget crisis, an International Space Station and an amateur radio station on said facility is always somewhat questionable; however, we are 'cautiously optimistic' that we will have an amateur radio station on the International Space Station. The SAREX Working Group is currently working with our counterparts

in Russia and in other countries to develop a formal, international plan for amateur radio operations on the International Space Station. We are also working with NASA to make sure there are sufficient resources (power, space, antennas) to have a robust amateur radio station on the facility. We have developed an initial cut on the 2-meter frequencies and are working on the selection of frequencies above 2-meters."

■ On February 1, the VEC's Question Pool Committee released a revised syllabus for the Element 2 and Element 3A Question Pools. This is the framework used in the addition, deletion and revision of all Novice and Technician license written examination questions. A copy (and instructions on how you may participate in the revision process) may be obtained from the:

National Conference of VECs, Inc.
Question Pool Committee
Ray Adams, N4BAQ, Chairman
5833 Clinton Highway, Suite #203;
Knoxville, TN 37912-2500.

Please include a large business-sized self-addressed stamped envelope.

■ KV4FZ's amateur radio license renewal denied! On Feb. 2, 1994, Herbert L. Schoenbohm, KV4FZ (Kingshill, Virgin Islands) applied to renew his amateur radio license. It was due to expire a month later. The renewal was not routinely granted, however, since Schoenbohm had been convicted in 1992 of fraudulently using access numbers which granted him long distance telephone service without payment. Evidence during the trial showed that between 1982 and 1989 that KV4FZ used illegally obtained codes to secure unauthorized telephone service from CALLS, the Caribbean Automated Long Line Service.

The U.S. Court for the District of the Virgin Islands found him guilty and sentenced Schoenbohm to two months imprisonment and a \$5,000 fine. The jail term was later changed to two months house arrest with two years probation. As a result of the conviction, KV4FZ was fired from his job as Chief of Communications for the Virgin Islands Police Department.

Schoenbohm then became a talk show host for radio station WRRA - and at the present time is the Director of Transportation for the Dept. of Property and Procurement for the Virgin

Islands government. He is also a part time District Field Representative for Delegate Victor O. Frazer who represents the Virgin Islands in the U.S. House of Representatives.

A Circuit Court affirmed Schoenbohm's conviction on appeal in July 1994 and a petition for rehearing was denied on Nov. 2, 1994. On Feb. 6, 1995, the FCC's Wireless Telecommunications Bureau designated KV4FZ for a hearing and began looking into whether his amateur license should be renewed since he had been convicted of a telecommunications related crime.

There also was a question whether Schoenbohm had encouraged others to seek help from elected members of Congress on his behalf which is prohibited under the FCC's *ex parte* rules.

Administrative law Judge Edward Luton released a preliminary decision on Feb. 1, 1996 denying Herbert L. Schoenbohm's application to renew his amateur service license. Judge Luton ruled that Mr. Schoenbohm's conviction for a felony involving fraudulent conduct relates to his inclination for truthfulness and that his altered testimony "...precludes any notion of either mitigation or rehabilitation."

After reviewing the transcription of a tape recording, Judge Luton was persuaded that Schoenbohm did indeed ask another ham operator over-the-air on 14.313 MHz in April 1995 to write Congressional Delegate Victor O. Frazer in his behalf. This was after his attorney had explained the *ex parte* rules to him.

Judge Luton concluded, "Mr. Schoenbohm's conviction for a felony involving fraudulent conduct reflects adversely on his propensity to obey the law, a trait predictive of reliability as a licensee. Schoenbohm's knowing violation of the *ex parte* rules provides further evidence that the Commission will not be able to rely on him to be truthful or to comply with the Communications Act and Commission rules and policies. Mr. Schoenbohm does not possess the requisite qualifications for a renewal of his amateur station and operator licenses."

The initial decision denying KV4FZ's license renewal becomes effective on March 3, 1996 providing "...exceptions are not filed ...and the Commission does not review the case on its own motion."

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HOW TO GET A DOMAIN NAME ON THE INTERNET

The first step in obtaining a domain name is to select an Internet Service Provider, because one of the requirements for registration is operational primary and secondary DNS (Domain Name System) servers.

By definition, a "domain" is a group of network host computers. The Domain Name System is a relatively new (1984) and easy-to-use Internet multi-level addressing scheme. It allows the use of English-like addresses on the Internet which are "somewhat" similar to postal mail addresses.

Every location on the Internet where a computer can be attached has a unique user-ID called an IP (for Internetworking Protocol) address. IP addresses are numeric-based "telephone numbers" (four numbers separated by three periods) that are automatically translated from alpha-numeric "domain" names. They work similar to the directory assistance operator who gives out a telephone number when you give them a person's name. The IP number is totally unrelated to the domain name. Every IP address on the Internet must, of course, be different.

Domain names are more convenient than a series of numbers and a lot easier to remember. The DNS address structure consists of three or more alpha-numeric fields which identify the (1) computer (your "name"), (2) group (one or more levels of "host" subdomain) and (3) top-level domain designation.

These components are separated by periods (called "dot.") Internet names are case insensitive, that is they can be in upper or lower case letters (or both.) There can be no spaces in Internet addresses. Your computer name and the "host" subdomain is separated by the "at sign" - @. An example of an Internet address might be: robert@atlas.com. Top level domains take two forms: organizational and geographical. The recognized top-level Organizational Domains are:

- .com commercial organizations
- .edu educational institutions
- .gov U.S. government sites
- .mil Dept. of Defense (military) sites
- .net Internet gateways, operations and services
- .org Organizations, usually not-for-profit groups

The domain name is considered to be registered to an organization even if the "organization" is an individual. Most domain names in the U.S. end with the above six types. Countries outside the U.S. have chosen to follow a different scheme. In Great Britain, for example: .ac means "academic" (instead of .edu.)

The Geographic Domains are 2-letter country oriented such as .au for Australia, .ca for Canada, .uk for the United Kingdom, etc. Country codes must always appear on the extreme right. They also can reflect locations in the United States such as: computer@sf.ca.us (for San Francisco, CA United

States.) Top level names can also be a combination of organizational and geographic domains. Geographic domain names usually - but not always indicate the location. All alpha-numeric addresses are converted into numeric IP addresses and a relocated server would respond to this address no matter where it was located.

You work backwards to interpret the address. Using our address example: robert@atlas.com is a commercial (.com) site on the Atlas host computer and the individual computer is "Robert." This is an simplified explanation of the DNS.

How do you get an Internet address?

You could subscribe to a consumer online service and they would provide you with a no cost Internet address such as GTVT44A@prodigy.com (my Prodigy address.) The first characters are my membership number "at" (@) Prodigy.com

Many companies, organizations and even individuals are applying for their own domain names. These two domains are the last two names in an address. For example, the American Radio Relay League and Radioamateur Satellite Corp., both have their own domains (arrl.org and amsat.org)

Application for a domain name can only be accomplished electronically by filing a form via e-mail directly to HOSTMASTER@INTERNIC.NET. You must use a specific "Domain Name Template" form which is available from Network Solutions, Inc. They do NOT accept hard copy applications ...even if sent by facsimile. A domain name registration fee of \$100.00 is applicable. This covers the \$50.00 maintenance fee for two years. After the two year period, an invoice will be sent on an annual basis.

The party requesting registration of the host domain name must certify that to the best of their knowledge, the use of this name does not violate trademark or other statutes. Registering a two-part domain name does not confer any legal rights to that name and any disputes between parties over the rights to use a particular name must be legally settled between the contending parties. The two parts that you apply for are the subdomain (host) and domain type such as: atlas.com. A "policy statement" concerning the use of domain names is available on the Internet at: <ftp://rs.internic.net/policy/internic.domain.policy>

Network Solutions, Inc. (InterNIC) is the firm appointed to register Internet domain names. They may be reached at: 505 Huntman Park Drive, Herndon, VA 22070 - Tel. (703) 742-4884 or 742-4777. Additional information about InterNIC Registration Services is available at URL: <http://rs.internic.net/rs-internic.html>. You can determine if a domain name has already been registered by accessing their "whois" function.

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AMATEUR RADIO CALL SIGNS

..issued as of the first of February 1996:

Radio District	Gp. "A"	Gp. "B"	Gp. "C"	Gp. "D"
	Extra	Advan.	Tech/Gen	Novice
0 (*)	AB0AO	KI0AV	(****)	KB0VFH
1 (*)	AA1PL	KE1EA	N1WOJ	KB1BWP
2 (*)	AB2AA	KG2FN	(****)	KB2WXM
3 (*)	AA3NK	KE3VY	N3WTW	KB3BNP
4 (*)	AE4QB	KT4KE	(****)	KF4GNF
5 (*)	AC5GK	KK5WI	(****)	KC5SQT
6 (*)	AC6SH	KQ6DN	(****)	KF6BGO
7 (*)	AB7OR	KJ7UK	(****)	KC7PBF
8 (*)	AA8VV	KG8VF	(****)	KC8CGD
9 (*)	AA9RE	KG9FK	(****)	KB9MOU
N. Mariana Is.	KH0V	AH0AW	KH0ER	WH0ABE
Guam	WH2S	AH2DB	KH2PL	WH2ANP
Johnston Is.	AH3D	AH3AD	KH3AG	WH3AAG
Midway Is.		AH4AA	KH4AG	WH4AAH
Hawaii	(**)	AH6OK	(****)	WH6CZW
Kure Is.			KH7AA	
Amer. Samoa	AH8O	AH8AH	KH8CK	WH8ABF
Wake W. Peale	AH9C	AH9AD	KH9AE	WH9AAI
Alaska	(**)	AL7QI	(****)	WL7CRO
Virgin Is.	WP2V	KP2CJ	NP2IU	WP2AIA
Puerto Rico	(**)	(**)	(****)	WP4NIR

* = All 2-by-1 call signs have been allocated. 2-by-2 (Group A) AA-AK call signs now being assigned.

** = All 2-by-1 call signs have been assigned in Hawaii, Alaska & Puerto Rico.

*** = All KP4-by-2 call signs assigned in Puerto Rico.

****= Group "C" (N-by-3) call signs have now run out in all but the 1st and 3rd call district.

[Source: FCC, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania]

NEW AND UPGRADING AMATEUR STATISTICS FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY - 1996

License Class	New Amateurs	Upgrading Amateurs
Novice	129	0
Technician	2704	0
Tech Plus	271	629
General	39	556
Advanced	4	428
Extra Class	7	356
Club	125	0
Total	3279	1969

The number of new (first time licensed) and upgrading amateurs were higher than normal during January 1996 due to the government shutdown in December. Licenses for successful examinees after December 18th (which would have been issued in December 1995) were not issued until mid-January 1996.

COMMUNICATIONS ACT REWRITE ELIMINATES UNNECESSARY REGULATIONS AND FUNCTIONS

On Thursday, February 1, the House and Senate overwhelmingly approved historic telecommunications legislation that deregulates local and long distance telephone, radio, cable, television and satellite. President Clinton signed the measure into law a week later (February 8th.)

The primary goal of the bill is to break down the regulatory barriers that separate the nation's telecommunications industries. Now each will fight tooth-and-nail for their place on the information highway which will have many forms and on-ramps. Instead of single lane roads, the highway will be a multi-faceted communications turnpike as telecommunications companies enter additional businesses. It will be hard to know in which vehicle you are travelling.

Of interest to consumers is a provision which requires TV sets to contain a "V-chip" allowing parents to block out violent programming. And it now becomes illegal to transmit indecent content to minors using any telecommunications device, including computers. This especially impacts the Internet. The bill even deregulates Amateur Radio license examination procedures.

Telecommunications reform and ham radio

First a little background. On February 1, 1995, Mary Beth Richards, the FCC's Special Counsel on Reinventing Government published a report entitled *"Creating a Federal Communications Commission for the Information Age."* She had been appointed to spearhead a year long review on how the FCC should streamline processes and reduce regulatory burdens.

Appendix "A" of that report contained a list of recommended changes to the Communications Act. Recommendation No. 32 concerned Amateur Radio Examination Procedures. Richards suggested that burdensome conflict of interest, record keeping and financial certifications be eliminated. Her recommendation could not be implemented, however, until a change was made to the Communication Act.

Tucked away in Section 403 of the massive telecommunications-deregulation bill was the Amateur Radio legislation that Richards asked for. The Communications Act changes that apply to Amateur Radio examinations only took up a couple of paragraphs in the rewrite. They were in the form of a list of added and deleted words and paragraphs to Section 4 of the Act which covers miscellaneous provisions. Few people reading the new regulations will know what they really mean. Here is a list of those changes:

Action:

- (1) in subparagraph (A) - Section 4(f)(4)(A) - is amended
 - (A) by inserting 'or administering' after 'for'

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purposes of preparing';
(B) by inserting 'of' after 'than the class'; and
(C) by inserting 'or administered' after 'for which the examination is being prepared';

Reasoning:

Subparagraph 4(f)4(A) previously referred only to preparing examinations and 4(f)4(B) to administering examinations. The new wording combines both preparing and administering examinations under one subparagraph. The new subparagraph now reads: (The new words are in capital letters.)

Sec. 4(f) 4(A) The Commission, for purposes of preparing **OR ADMINISTERING** any examination for an amateur station operator license may accept and employ the voluntary and uncompensated services of any individual who holds an amateur station operator license of a higher class than the class **OF** license for which the examination is being prepared **OR ADMINISTERED**. In the case of examinations for the highest class of amateur station operator license, the Commission may accept and employ such services of any individual who holds such class of license.

Action:

(2) Subparagraph 4(B) is deleted in its entirety from the Act. The biggest impact is volunteer examiners or their VECs will no longer be prohibited from participating in the manufacture or distribution of amateur radio equipment or in the origination, production or distribution of license preparation materials.

Reasoning:

This subparagraph, which previously covered administering an examination, has been combined with subparagraph 4(A). VEs and VECs will be able to originate and/or distribute (pass out free or sell - with or without profit) training materials to examinees. VEs who are employed by a firm which sells radio equipment or publications will no longer be prohibited from being a VE.

Subparagraph 4(B) (**now abolished**) previously read:

Sec. 4(f) 4(B) The Commission, for purposes of administering any examination for an amateur station operator license, may accept and employ the voluntary and uncompensated services of any individual who holds an amateur station operator license of a higher class than the class license for which the examination is being conducted. In the case of examinations for the highest class of amateur station operator license, the Commission may accept and employ such services of any individual who holds such class of license. Any company or other entity which is engaged in the manufacture or distribution of equipment used in connection with amateur radio transmissions, or in the preparation or distribution of any publication used in preparation for obtaining amateur station operator licenses, shall not be eligible to render any service under this subparagraph.

Action:

Reference to subparagraph (C) was removed from subparagraph (H.)

Reasoning:

Subparagraph (B) was deleted from the Communications Act and other succeeding subparagraphs were renumbered. Subparagraph (H) now reads:

Sec. 4(f) 4(H) The Commission, in accepting and employing services of individuals under subparagraphs (A) and (B) shall seek to achieve a broad representation of individuals and organizations interested in amateur station operation.

Action:

In subparagraph (J) reference to subparagraph (B) was deleted. The last line which requires that VEs and VECs maintain records and submit annual expense certifications was abolished.

Reasoning:

The annual VE and VEC certification and record keeping burden were eliminated.

Sec. 4(f) 4(J) With respect to the acceptance of voluntary uncompensated services for the preparation, processing, or administration of examinations for amateur station operator licenses, pursuant to subparagraph (A) [or (B)] of this paragraph, individuals or organizations which provide or coordinate such authorized volunteer services may recover from examinees reimbursement for out-of-pocket costs. The total amount allowable cost reimbursement per examinee [beginning in 1984] shall not exceed \$4.00, adjusted annually every January 1 for changes in the Department of Labor Consumer Price Index. [Such individuals and organizations shall maintain records of out-of-pocket expenditures and shall certify annually to the Commission that all costs for which reimbursement was obtained were necessarily and prudently incurred.] Note: *Last line in brackets was eliminated.*

The fact that the Telecommunications Act of 1996 has been approved by Congress and signed into law by the President does not mean that the Part 97 Rules are automatically changed when President Clinton signs the bill. The Part 97 Rules still must be amended by the FCC. But it probably is a foregone conclusion that the old burdensome regulations will be abolished since it was the FCC who asked Congress for the legislation that would permit them to do eliminate the conflict-of-interest and record keeping regulations.

The Amateur Radio VE conflict-of-interest rules are contained in Section §97.509(b)(5), VEC conflict-of-interest rules are contained in Section §97.521(e) and the record keeping rules are listed in Section §97.527(c),(d),(e), and (f). All of these Part 97 rules are based on the previous Communications Act requirements.